

Putting Prevention to Work in Yakima and Kittitas Counties

Chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and lung disease are the leading causes of death in Washington State. These diseases are often preventable. Being physically active, eating healthy foods, and not using tobacco reduces the likelihood of getting one of these diseases. Healthy environments give Washington residents the opportunity to make healthy choices.

In March 2010, Communities Putting Prevention to Work provided federal stimulus dollars to make changes that would encourage people to eat healthier, get more physical activity, and stop using tobacco. This is an example of how stimulus funds changed communities in Kittitas and Yakima counties.

YAKIMA

69 percent of adults in chemical dependency treatment centers smoke, compared with 15 percent of adults statewide.^{1, 2}

Quitting smoking is hard enough. It is often more difficult for people struggling with an additional drug or alcohol problem. Patients at Triumph Treatment Services in Yakima County deal with such issues. Triumph Treatment Services provides help for chemically dependent people and their families. They offer inpatient and outpatient treatment as well as permanent, transitional, and emergency housing. Until recently, patients at Triumph faced an additional challenge – exposure to tobacco smoke in their facilities.

Giving patients the choice to recover tobacco-free

Staff from Triumph Treatment Services participated in a statewide workshop to train staff at chemical dependency treatment centers on tobacco cessation strategies. As a result, they began actively helping patients quit smoking.

Men who are part of the residential 30-day program are now asked about their tobacco use upon admission. Men who smoke are offered nicotine replacement therapy if they want to quit, or further education if they aren't ready yet. This program helps an estimated 1,000 men per year.

Impact

In 2011, Triumph Treatment Services declared most of their facilities smoke-free, protecting many patients from secondhand smoke. This change included 145 housing projects for families and children.

KITTITAS

75 percent of adults in Kittitas County don't eat enough fruits and vegetables.³

The 18th Street Deli and Grocery is the only grocery store on the north side of Ellensburg in Kittitas County. Before last year they had a typical corner store inventory—alcohol on two aisles, snacks high in salt and fat, and only one basket of fresh produce.

Creating a place to buy healthy food

Using stimulus funds, the 18th Street Deli and Grocery transformed into a healthy corner store. The aisles of alcohol were replaced with cases of low-salt, low-fat frozen foods. Fresh fruits and vegetables filled shelves instead of just one basket. The owner also removed all tobacco advertising and put cigarettes out of sight.

Impact

Sales at the 18th Street Deli and Grocery have increased. Residents on the north side of Ellensburg are now making healthy choices right in their own neighborhood.



Data sources:

¹ Data for adult patients admitted to publicly funded chemical dependency treatment in Washington State, Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery Treatment Analyzer (DBHR-TA), 2011

² Data for adults in Washington State, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2010

³ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2007 and 2009